

REMARKS

Claim Objections

1) The Examiner has objected to claim 33 because the claim depends from canceled claim 32.

Applicants have canceled claim 33.

Applicants therefore request that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claim 33.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102(b)

2) The Examiner has rejected claim 1-3, 5-9, 13, 14, and 22-30 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lafontaine (USPN 5,868,735).

Applicants have canceled claims 1-3, 5-9, and 22-30.

Applicants have amended claim 13 to depend upon allowed claim 12. Claim 14 depends upon claim 13 and therefore no longer depends upon rejected claim 1.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-9, 13, 14, and 22-30 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lafontaine.

3) The Examiner has rejected claim 1-10, 22, 23, and 25-30 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Buchholtz (USPN 5,409,006).

Applicants have canceled claims 1-10, 22, 23, and 25-30.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-10, 22, 23, and 25-30 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Buchholtz.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 103(a)

4) The Examiner has rejected claim 11 and 15-21 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Lafontaine (USPN 5,868,735) in view of Lafontaine (USPN 6,068,653).

Applicants have canceled claims 11 and 15-21.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 11 and 15-21 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lafontaine ('735) in view of Lafontaine ('653).

5) The Examiner has rejected claims 31 and 33 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward et al. (5,716,386).

Applicants have canceled claims 31 and 33.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 31 and 33 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward et al.

Allowable Subject Matter

6) The Examiner has allowed claims 12, 34, 35, and 26.

In a prior response to the Examiner's instant Office action, mailed 9th November, 2007, Applicants amended claim 13 to depend upon allowed claim 12. Applicants amended allowed claim 34 to incorporate the limitations of claim 3. Applicants added new claims 37-50 that depend upon allowed claim 12.

CONCLUSION

With the above additional remarks, Applicants submit that the instant application is now in condition for allowance.

If the US Patent Office believes that communication would further the prosecution of this application, then the appropriate US Patent Office personnel are invited to contact the Applicants' below-signed representative at their earliest convenience.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Bell & Associates Deposit Account No. 50-3194.

Dated and signed:

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